

REBUTAL

TO A

Sawcy Levite.

IN

A N S W E R

To a Sermon Preach'd

By EDWARD OLIVER, M.A.

Before Sir Humphry Edmon late Lord
Mayor of London, at St. Paul's Cathed-
ral, on Sunday October 22. 1698.

By a Lover of Unity.

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THE BIBLE

TO A

SACRED SERVICE.

IN

AN ENTHUSIASM

TO A SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

BY EDMUND O'LEARY.

George Washington, the author of the Constitution, and the first President of the United States, died at Mount Vernon, on the 23rd of December, 1799, at the age of 67 years. He was buried in a vault under the floor of the parlor of his house, where he had been interred in 1776, when he was captured by the British, and sent to England as a prisoner. His body was removed to a stone sarcophagus in the crypt of the National Cathedral, in Washington, D. C., in 1837.

EDMUND O'LEARY.

A N
A N S W E R
T O
Mr. Oliver's Sermon.

IT was a Circumstance peculiar to the Deliverance of the Children of *Israel* out of *Egypt*, that not so much as a Dog moved his Tongue against them, and such a Circumstance perhaps as the Church is in no Age to expect the like. The King and Parliament have thought fit to set the Dissenters at Liberty, and to give them a Manumission from their more than Egyptian Taskmasters; in which every true Protestant rejoic'd, as hoping that it might be an effectual Preparative to unite Protestants among themselves at home, and that it would tend to confirm and strengthen the Protestant Interest abroad. But a certain Party of the Church of *England*, have, notwithstanding the concurrence of the greatest and best of her Bishops in settling the said Liberty by a Law, been always uneasy and peevish since, and constantly bawling against Dissenters: and not content with a Badg of servitude still fix'd upon them, by which they are excluded not only from all Ecclesiastical Preferments or Benefices, but from all places of power and trust in the Civil Government, nothing will satisfy them except they have liberty to bite and devour their dissenting Brethren,

thren, as in former Reigns. And it's very well known, not only what heavy Censures his Majesty has lain under by that Party, because of his Fatherly Protection granted to Christians of all Denominations, but what Obstruction they laid in the way of his Affairs, in Council, Parliament, Army and Navy ; nay, how uneasy they have made him in his very Household ; so that it would seem highly necessary that a due Enquiry should be made by what secret Springs those Persons are acted, that continue thus to foment Divisions amongst us. It is worthy our observation that this spirit of Discord at home, seems to be invigorated and gather strength at the same time when the spirit of Persecution rages afresh against the Protestants abroad. It is not at all to be doubted, but as Cain was stir'd up against his Brother Abel by that wicked one, that all his Successors in Persecution are still influenc'd by that same malignant Spirit, who hath been a Murderer from the beginning ; but at the same time it cannot be denied that Satan makes use of Men as his Instruments to sow division and discord. Nor is it unworthy our Observation, that as the Papists abroad, and our implacable Ceremony-mongers at home, have their Spirits fermented at one and the same time, it is also in a great measure for one and the same Cause, viz. because they cannot bring all Men to submit to their Ceremonies and Modes of Worship of human Institution : and in truth of the two, our English Formalists seem to be the least excusable, because they own themselves not to be infallible ; disown human Tradition as a Rule of Faith, and in all their Controversies with the Papists, make use of the same Arguments against the Church of Rome, that we make use of against the Ceremonies and Discipline of the Church of England.

They are still the more blaine-worthy, because formerly

they

they laid the charge upon the Government that these things which are the subject of discord, were still continued amongst us; but now that we have a Prince, who hath solicited that his Subjects might be united, and those things that are the Cause of Contention remov'd, they are so far from complying with him in it, that they are ready to fly in his face upon that account. This, if we may believe Dr. Burnet, the present Bishop of *Salisbury*, who cannot be suspected of partiality in the case, was far from being the temper of the Church of *England*-Bishops, at least the best of 'em, in Queen *Elizabeth's* days, that Learned and Moderate Bishop in his Letters, containing an Account of what seem'd most remarkable in *Switzerland*, *Italy*, &c. p. 42. says, " He saw the Originals of Letters writ by several of the English Bishops to *Bullinger* at *Zurich*, in Queen *Elizabeth's* time, whereby it appears, that the antient habits were preserv'd rather in compliance with the Queen, than out of any liking they had to them. That Bishop *Jewel* that great Ornament of the English Church, in a Letter Feb. 8. 1566, wishes that the *Vestments*, together with all the other Remants of Popery, might be thrown out of their Churches, and out of the Minds of the People, and laments the Queen's fixedness to them. In January that same year Bishop *Sands* wrote to the same purpose, *Contentitur de Vestibus papisticis, utendis vel non utendis; dabit Deus his quoque finem.* Horn Bishop of *Winchester* July 16. 1565. regrets the Act concerning Habits, and expresses some hopes that it might be repeal'd next Session of Parliament, if the Popish Party did not hinder it. In many Letters on that subject it is asserted, that both *Cranmer* and *Ridley* intended to procure an Act for abolishing the Habits. Bishop *Grindal* in a Letter of Aug. 27. 1566, writes that all the Bishops who had been beyond Sea, at their return dealt with the Queen to let the

" matter of the Habits fall; but she continued inflexible
" —and Cox Bishop of *Ely*, one of the most violent
" Men of the time, in one of his Letters bewails the aver-
" sion they found in the Parliament to reform those abuses.

Then by the Testimony of these Great Men, who may well be called the Fathers of the Church of *England*, it appears the things in controversy betwixt us, are *Popish Remnants*; and that the Popish Party did then hinder the Acts concerning them to be repeal'd. And it is very well known that these things have been continued ever since, and some Additions made to them by the Influence of the Popish Party, who were rampant in the beginning of *Charles the First's Reign*, and had no little Interest at Court, and in obtaining the *Act of Uniformity*, after the Restoration of K. *Charles II*. This being uncontrovably true, we have reason to believe that the same Party in concert with the Jacobites, are still the Incendiaries, and make it their busines to add Fuel to our Flames; but we have this Happiness, that they cannot now, as formerly, make Tools of the Court, and by his Majesty's prudent Conduct, the highest places in the Church are many of them fill'd with Persons of a more generous and Christian Temper, than to comply with such angry ill-natur'd Men, that would again sacrifice the peace of the Nation to their own peevish humours. It remains then that the Tools they now work upon are some of the inferiour Clergy, and such of the dignified ones as are perhaps discontented that they are not elevated to an higher Dignity; from them, or the professed Jacobites proceed those virulent Invectives, that have of late by a supererogation of Malice been brought forth into the world against Dissenters: by the timing of the thing it would seem they have a design to render them odious and obnoxious to the ensuing Parliament; and if they can but prevail to have their Liberty taken off or restrain'd, then they know that the Nation must be unavoidably

voidably thrown into new Convulsions, that a great part of the Subjects who have been so useful and well affected to the present Government, will be thereby deliver'd up into the hands of their and its implacable Enemies; that the Episcopal Party in *Scotland* who are avowed Enemies to his Majesty's Person and Government, will be thereby encourag'd to embroil that Kingdom afresh; that the People of the North of *Ireland*, to whom all *Britain* ows so much, will also come under the lash: and so by an universal Confusion at home, whilst the Protestants are ungratefully persecuted by their Allies abroad, the way will be pav'd for the return of the late King *James*. This appears plainly to be the natural Tendency of those ill-tim'd Divisions that are so industriously fomented amongst us. To this end are all those *Alarms to the true Sons of the Church directed, and their imminent danger from the Presbyterians, their Imperium in Imperio, and the erecting of their Classes inveniatae*. What a dreadful noise for this end have some Persons made about a harmless Letter, directed from a *Presbyterian Minister in Newbury to another, importuning a design among the Protestant dissenting Ministers thro'out this Kingdom to advance the Interest of Religion, and Reformation of Manners*? What malicious Reflections have there been made upon that Letter by men of different Kidneys? What frightful Ideas do some men endeavour to possess the minds of the Nation with against the Presbyterians, in a late virulent Pamphlet, call'd, *An Apology for the English Presbyterians*? What strange Insinuations and imbibited Reflections does that Libel contain against the Church of *Scotland*, and the Classical Presbyterians? and who can doubt of the mischievous design of all this malicious Clamor, when they know that the Papists and Jacobites raise the Hue and Cry on the one hand, and *L. and F.* with Sir *R. L.* raise it on the other? what pleasant game would it afford to the French King and the late King *James* to set the Church of *England* set on by this means?

means to hunt down the Presbyterians? they are indeed the noblest Quarry, but if the wild Boar get once into the Forest, can the other Parties hope to escape? Yes, why not, L. would once more be of the Cabinet Council at Whitehal, and the Cardinal Protector of those of his Order.

But I shall leave that honest Triumvirate to go on with their Confab in *High-Holborn*, and heartily wish that none of 'em may ever have occasion to go any higher. I return again to our Church of *England Friends*, it being high time to give one of 'em a *Rowland* for his *Oliver*.

It seems, if Youngsters be once advanc'd to Fellowships in Colledges, and honour'd to wear Scarfs as Noblemen's domestick Chaplains, and to this have added the Title of Master of Arts, that they may then take the liberty to preach what they please, and to reflect upon those who have the Liberty of their Worship allowed them by Law as well as themselves; whether that be answerable to that deference to Magistrates, which Mr. Oliver preaches up so much in his Sermon, to throw such squint Reflections upon our Legislators, and to upbraid one of the greatest Magistrates of the Nation to his face for doing that which is allow'd both by the Laws of God and the Land, let him look to it. If his Heat had not been greater than his Judgment; he ought to have consider'd that one of the chief Arguments for Ceremonies was, *that being indifferent in themselves, yet when commanded by the Magistrate, they ought to be complied with;* this he will find to have been the opinion of those great Bishops formerly mentioned in Q. Elizabeth's time, as will appear by the Letters before quoted, Mr. Powel de *adiasphoris*, Tilen's *Parenasis*, Paybody's *Apology*, &c. and therefore seeing the Magistrate hath taken off those Laws that enjoin'd the practise of those indifferent Ceremonies, according to that Argument no man is now oblig'd to comply with them.

Therefore

Therefore as Mr. Oliver's Reflections favour nothing of that Universal Charity he tells us our Blessed Redeemer came into the World to Teach; he cannot expect that his Doctrine will be able to remove the stiff Prejudices of those he pretends to Convince, as our Saviour's Doctrine convinc'd the *Samaritan Woman*.

Page 3. of his Sermon, he says, *Though I believe there is neither Jew nor Samaritan so convince in this Auditory, yet we have th^e se I fear sometimes to deal with, who make such a Medley of Religion, that they are near as dangerous to the Truth of it.* For so do the Romanists confound their Will-worship and Idol^yry with the Essentials of Christianity, that they take both from its Truth and Spirituality. So do other Dissenters from us, mistake the true Notion of its Spirituality, that they deride from the very Essentials of our most Holy Religion, and would go about to persuade us its Truth consisted in mere *Airy Notions, and Wild Enthusiasms*.

By Mr. Oliver's leave, it seems there was something of a Jew in the Pulpit, if there was none in the Auditory; for he seems himself to be for some of the Jewish Ceremonies, and perhaps it may be no diskindness to him, if he did a little partake of their Circumcision too, for his Heat certainly wants a Cooler, and that would do it for some days at least. Whether he has any thing of the loose Temper of the *Samaritan Woman* in his Text or not, I know not; but something of her Ignorance I am sure he has, and if to that he will add her Confession of Sins, he may plead a Right to that Advantage which he tells us, pag. 2. *Ignorance and a Confession of Sins, have above an affected pretence to Knowledge and a Counterfeited Zeal.*

Well, it seems he thought he had some Papists and Dissenters in his Auditory, the Truth of which I know not, for indeed I was not there to see; but I am of Opinion there was something of a Papist in the Pulpit too;

for I find him a mighty Zealot for those Ceremonies which we have so lately heard some of Queen Elizabeth's Bishops accounted *Popish Remnants*. And others of his Party have acknowledged, *That the Ceremonies are inconvenient, but yet to be observed for Peace; and that Offence and hindrance to Edification do arise from those Ceremonies*, according to Dr. Burgess, in his Answer to the Reply, *Prif.* p. 43. And Mr. Sprint, Reply to the Answer, p. 270. And *Cassand. Anglican.* pag. 46.

Camero, a Man of great Note, and Friend to our Author's way, says exprely in his Popish Prejudices, c. 10. *That so admirable was the simplicity of the Primitive Church in the Times of the Apostles, that there were no other Ceremonies then to be found in her but the Celebration of Baptism by washing of Water, and of the Holy Supper according to the Lord's Institution, in taking the Bread and Wine, and distributing them after Thanksgiving, and the Imposition of Hands upon those who extraordinarily received the Holy Ghost, and for a miraculous healing the Sick.* I would pray then this Youngster to consider whether the Judgment of those Great Men of his own side, or that of such an Upstart as he, is most to be valued, and whether we have not reason to reject those Ceremonies, when *Camero*, a Friend of their own, says in the same place, *That Superstition, the Mother of Ceremonies, is lavish and prodigal; Spiritual Whoredom as it is, hath this common with the Bodily, both of 'em must have their Paintings, their Trinkets, and Inveaghments.* I could give him more Quotations of this sort, but these are enough to convince the World that it were fitter for him to go home to *Corpus Christi College*, and read a little more, than thus to endeavour to perpetuate a Schism in the Body of Christ, by Preaching up those Ceremonies which the Greatest Men of the Church have complained they were forc'd to comply with, out of Necessity, and not out of Choice.

If he did but advert to his own Concession, that the Romanists take both from the Truth and Spirituality of the Christian Religion, by confounding their Will-Worship and Idolatry with the Essentials of Christianity; it were enough to cure him of his Fondness for Ceremonies; and I would fain know of him, whether enjoining the Sign of the Cross in Baptism, and kneeling at the Communion, which he cannot pretend have any other Foundation but the Will of Man, don't fall under the same Charge he brings against Popish Will-Worship; so that our Author has been as unhappy in stumbling upon this Parallel, as the E. of Roscommon, a noted Papist, was to translate that part of Horace into English Verse; *Olim truncus eram*: *ficulnus inutile lignum*, &c. where the Poet brings in the Clown, debating with himself what use he should put a Log of Wood to, and at last he resolv'd to make a God on't.

Then his malicious Charge against Dissenters in general, as derogating from the Essentials of Religion, by Enthusiastical Notions, serves only to discover the Confusedness of his own Brain, or the Rancour of his Breast. He may know, if he pleases, that the main Body of Dissenters allow no other Rule of Faith and Practice, but the Sacred Text; tho' some who perhaps go under that Name may be tainted with Enthusiasm: and how those that bring every thing to the Touchstone of the Law, and the Testimony, and make no Account of pretended Revelations, or Impulses, can be call'd Enthusiasts, let him determine. It looks Ten times more Enthusiastical in him to trump up the Authority of what he calls the Church, above that of the Scripture, which enjoins a *mutual Forbearance in Things indifferent, and expressly forbids condemning one another for Meats, Drinks, and Days*, 1 Cor. 8. Rom. 14. 5. &c. than any thing he can charge upon the Presbyterians. He must, or at least ought to know, that
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the main Plea which those of his Party make use of to defend that wherein they differ from us, is *Succession, Antiquity, and Tradition*, which he himself owns, Page 6. may be strangely mistaken, and that Tradition deserves but little Credit: But this was a Stone he borrowed from the Presbyterian Heap, to throw at the Papists; and to be quit with us, he borrows a couple from the Popish Heap, that is, the Authority of the Church, and Primitive Practice, to throw at the Presbyterians, as we shall see afterwards.

Mr. Oliver tells us, Page 5. That the Jews and Samaritans differed chiefly in the Place of their Sacrifices: But why did not he take Notice that this is also one Point of the Difference betwixt his Party and the Dissenters, which is clearly determin'd here by the God of Truth himself, for the latter? He knows that those of his Faction ascribe a Sanctity to the very Places of Worship, even whilst there is no Worship perform'd in them; and therefore at all times uncover themselves in Cathedrals, and many of them in ordinary Churches, especially in the Chancels, for which they cannot shew one Text of Scripture: but on the contrary, our Saviour here informs us, that the Day shall come when *Men shall Worship him in Spirit and Truth, without regard to any particular Places;* and we find that he himself, and his Apostles, practic'd accordingly, and worship'd either in private Houses, Mountains, Ships, Sea-coasts, or any where, as Providence offer'd an Opportunity, without a formal Consecration of any particular Place, which he knows is contrary to the Practice of the Church of England.

I come next to consider his Explanation of what is meant by Worshipping God in Spirit; which he tells us is *when we are possess'd with a true and lively Sense of his divine Majesty, Power, and Rule over us, humbly acknowledge his unspeakable Greatness; so alsoe his infinite Wisdom, which searches*

searches our Hearts, that we in all things submit to his all-wise Will, when we love him with all our Hearts, and all our Souls, and yet Fear and Reverence him as a Father, and with the greatest Cheerfulness obey whatsoever he has been pleas'd to command us; nor are not only give up our Souls pure and spotless, but keep our Bodies fit Temples too, for the Holy Ghost, and thus join'd, offer up our selves o'er reasonable Service.

There's scarcely any thing in this Definition, but what is comprehended in this one Distich of Cato,

Sic Deus est animus nubis nō cimnandus;

Huc tibi præputz sit puramente co'endus.

or what a meer Deit, who owns no Revelation, will grant; but methinks one who pretends to be a Minister of Jesus Christ, shou'd not have been guilty of such a gross Omission, as never once to have mentioned his Name in the Explanation of Spiritual Worship, when nothing is more expressly enjoin'd in the Scripture, than that all Gospel-Worship should be perform'd in his Name, without which none of our Devotion is acceptable. I would therefore advise this upstart Divine, first to read and understand the Gospel better, before he pretend to preach it, and to know his own Duty before he offer to teach other Men theirs, and out of pity to his Ignorance, or to chastise him for his faulty Definition, would refer him to *John* 14. 13. where we are taught to offer up our Prayers in the Name of Jesus, to *Matthew* 18. 20. and other Places, where we are taught to assemble in his Name, to *Matthew* 28. 19. &c. where Ministers are commanded to preach and baptise in his Name, to *1 John* 3. 23. where we are commanded to believe in his Name, and to *Heb.* 13. 15. where we are enjoin'd to offer Praises to God by him. Now these being all Acts of Spiritual Worship, is it not strange that this Novice in Divinity should not so much as once have mentioned the Name of Jesus in his Definition of worshipping God by the Spirit.

I suppose he would be very angry at those who should forbear bowing at hearing of his Name, which is no where commanded, and yet he pretends to explain Spiritual Worship, without taking so much as once notice of that blessed Name; though there be none other under Heaven by which we can be sav'd.

Another thing he hath omitted in his Definition, is; that to VVorship God in Spirit, must necessarily infer the worshipping of him according to the Direction of his own Spirit in the Sacred Scriptures, without which, all those Impressions of his Majesty, Power, Rule, and Wisdom that he talks of, signifie nothing. The Heathens have express'd themselves to Admiration on all these Attributes, and yet we cannot say, that they worshipp'd him in Spirit, because it was not according to his Revealed Will, they worshipp'd they knew not what, as our Saviour here tells the Samaritan Woman.

He goes on thus, Page 10, *That having once this true Notion of the Almighty, we exert our selves in Acts of Piety and publick Devotion, express our Sense of his Power and Rule, by our daily Supplications, our Acknowledgements of his Goodness, by our continual Praise, our Love, by our Charity to our Neighbours, and Zeal for his Work and Service, and our Fear, by abstaining from the least Appearance of Evil; and all this with Humility and Reverence, Decency and Order, with Obedience to Authority, and Respect to those whom he has set over us; these being most certain and spiritual Duties, nay, the only things wherein we are capable of testifying that we really do worship him in Spirit.* A little further he says, *That God is a Spirit, and therefore his Worship ought to deduce its Source from the Reason and Soul of Man.* And in the 15th. Page, *That if Worship takes its rise from the Heart, then is it a Spiritual Worship.* And this he takes to be the true meaning of worshipping in Spirit. It's well he does but take it, but I think it's plain from what has been already said he mistakes it; for all this while it's

it's evident that *Cato* is his Distich before-named, had as true a Notion of Spiritual Worship as Mr. Oliver: And therefore I will make bold to tell him, that if he don't make haste to increase more in Spiritual Knowledge than hitherto he has done; it will be a great while before he deserve to be made a Spiritual Lord; but I am afraid he has already spoil'd his Lawn-Sleeves during this Reign, whatever hopes he may have in another.

I would fain know whether by part of his own definition of Spiritual Worship, he hath not excluded himself from the number of Spiritual Worshippers, by failing in his Obedience to Authority, and in his Respect to those whom God has set over us, in railing thus against those whose Worship is establish'd by Law as well as his own: Does he think, that when the King and Parliament pass'd the Act for Liberty, they design'd that every little Pragmatical Priest should revile Magistrates to their faces, and reflect upon the whole Dissenting Party in such a manner as he has done, for non compliance to Humane Ceremonies in Divine Worship? If it were so, then the Nonconformists are only ty'd down to a Stake, to be baited by every dumb Dog, that cannot bark, except it be for gain from his Quarter: Such kind of Dogs as these the Apostle enjoyns us to beware of, as well as of the Concession by which they made a Schism in the Church, and would have forc'd Circumcision and other Jewish Ceremonies into the Christian Vorship, *Pbil. 3. 2.* Just so our Author seems to be one of those that would tear the Flock, and return again to the old Vomit of Persecution; he and his Brother the Author of the *Mystery of Phantasm*, would make a delicate couple to be under the Conduct of some of Antichrist's Huntsmen, for they seem both of 'em to be deep-mouth'd, and so well vers'd in the Art already, that they understand all the Hunters Notes, from *Tone*, to *Tontoworontavom*.

We come next to hear him open upon full Scent; for Page 11 and 12. with a Medley of a Charge he falls foul upon some of the Dissenters; laying, *They are above Ordinances, and all manner of Rule, guided by Fancy and a Frank-Zeal.* I am afraid he has in those very words describ'd himself and the rest of his Kidney, who will force their own Impositions into the most Solemn Ordinances of the Gospel, and exclude those from the Church that won't comply with them; for if this be not to set themselves above all manner of Ordinances and Rule, when the Scripture expressly forbids any adding or diminishing to its self, as the Rule of our Faith and Manners, I cannot tell what is. However, I know that by this he means the Quakers and some others; but then in common Ingenuity he ought to have made a distinction, and not have added all Dissenters together, to inflame the Reckoning; and in the mean time let me tell him, that such as he set them a very bad Example, in going so far astray from the Rule, and making things they own to be indifferent, necessary terms of Communion.

He falls next upon those that make use of his Text against all manner of Ceremonies: But who these are, I know not, nor never heard of, nor I believe no body else; had he said, significant Ceremonies, or a kind of *Party-per-pale Sacraments, that must be outward and visible Signs of inward and Spiritual Graces, such as the Sign of the \ddagger , is made to be of our fighting under Christ's Banner, &c.* he had said somewhat; and then I should have made bold to tell him, tho' I incur the danger of an *ipso facto* Excommunication for it by the Canons of his Church, that such Ceremonies are *ipso facto* condemn'd by this Text, that teaches us we must worship God according to Truth, which is his Revealed will, and if he can find any thing there enjoying those Ceremonies, I will yield him the Cause, and for his further Comfort, I will also tell him, that what the Scripture doth not Command in matters of Worship,

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it forbids, and without the Law, and against the Law, as in Policy, so in Divinity, are both one according to Tertullian, in his Corona Militis; and I am of the mind he made a greater Figure in the Church than ever our Author will do so long as his Name is Oliver.

So little does this Zealous Ceremony-monger understand the Controversie in which he is so fierce a Disputant, that he tells us, we our selves make use of Ceremonies; and what ate they? Why, truly they are set Books, a formal Voice, and forced Gestures; a wonderful Discovery! worthy of the Genius of that Noble Author, call'd, *The Mystery of Phanaticism*: But does not this little Sprig, or Sucker of Divinity, know that these Things, if they must be Ceremonies, are not impos'd upon those of our Party as Terms of Communion? For our parts we are so little concern'd about such things, that we should not value it one rush if all the Youngsters of the Church wore their Shoes upon their Head, and their square Caps upon their Feet, as well as their Shirts on the outside of all their other Cloaths, if they would not thrust them down our Throats as Terms of Communion, and tell us we shall neither have the Priviledges of Men nor Christians, if we don't let them do so.

But now he comes with the killing Stroke, that it's almost time for the Huntsman to sound the Death of the Hart, with a *Tone Tonsonaven*, &c. He tells us, pag. 14, and 15. That the Objections against set Forms, and the Pretensions to the Spirit, from this Text, are vain and frivolous: Where is such Assistance promis'd, or upon what account indeed necessary? Let these Pretenders to Inspiration work Miracles too, and then we shall believe these extraordinary Gifts of the Holy Ghost, which we rightly now judg to be ceas'd---The very Opinion contradicts it self; and what they pretend an extemporary Effusion, is no more than a Form to all the Auditory --- and are of-

ten work'd up, by Heat and Passion, to say ~~now~~ to no better than Nonsense, sometimes, I fear, even Blasphemy it self --- Strange is it, that Men otherwise sober, and that will not venture a Sermon, which they will not address to the People, without Care and Accuracy of wording, should yet dare to entertain Commerce with God at all Adventures, buoy'd up with a little popular Applause and Self-Conceit ! Most evident it is, that what they would make the World believe is immediately from Heav'n, is attainable by Memory, and a Volubility of Speech, and perfected by a great share of Confidence.

Here, as elsewhere, this Novice hath entertain'd the Auditory with Ignorance, Railing, and Falshoods. I could wish that his Tutor, when he returns to Cambridge again, would whip him a little for *Ignoratio Elenchi*. Is it not a horrid shame, that a Confident Prig should step up to the Pulpit of the Greatest Cathedral in England, pretending to preach upon Controversies, and not so much as understand the State of the Question he pretends to handle ? Then let him know, that the Nonconformists don't deny the Lawfulness of set Forms, provided they be sound, and only made use of by those that can't do without them ; for they are always so good natur'd, as to allow the Lame a Crutch : But the thing they deny, is this, *that it is unlawful for any Church or Society of Men upon Earth, to impose Stated Forms of other Mens composing to be used by Ministers in the whole Exercise of their Ministerial Function, and no others :* This being a Yoke that many of the Conformists themselves don't submit their Necks to, but use Forms of their own composing, or extemporary Prayers, many times before Sermon, at visiting the Sick, and otherwise. If our Author will read *Didoclavius his Altare Damascenum*, an ancient and learned Author, or Dr. Collins of Norwich, a Modern Author upon the Subject, he will find this to be, and to have been the Principle of the Nonconfor-

conformists upon that Head ; and the reason of it is this, that the Gift of Prayer, as well as of Preaching, is given by our Saviour to his Ambassadors, else how should they be the Mouth of the People to him, as well as the Deliverers of his Message to them ? The stinting of Ministers to the Forms of others, is perfectly to make them guilty of the neglect of part of that Gift, which they receive at their Ordination by the hands of the Presbytery, against which the Apostle cautions *Timothy*, *1 Tim. 4. 14.* It is likewise plain by *Acts 6. 4.* that it is the Duty of Ministers to give themselves to Prayer, as well as to Preaching ; and seeing many of the Preachers, by giving themselves to it, (nay, most of those in other Countries) attain to a Faculty of delivering the Message of God in good Method and Language without Notes ; for what Reason can our Author think it impracticable for them, if they likewise give themselves to Prayer, to deliver their own, and their Peoples Desires, in the same manner to God without the help of a Form ? I confess for such as he, who seems to be grossly ignorant of the Office and Duty of a Minister, and is more like *Jeroboam's* Priests of old, that by consecrating themselves with a Bullock and ten Rams, were fit to be Priests to them that were no Gods, a Form of Prayer may be necessary ; for by his ignorant Twattle, he seems to be such a Parson as the Story goes of, who could not tell what Prayer to read for a poor Man, that came to him when his House was on Fire ; but at last bethought himself of that for Rain, which he wisely conceiv'd would extinguish the Flames : But when he came to mumble it over, it was only for moderate Showers ; which the poor Man knowing not to be enough for his Necessity, made bold to mend the Form, and cried out for whole Buckets full.

For his ignorant and irreligious Questions, *Where the Assistance of the Spirit is promised, or upon what account indeed necessary, they smell so rank of the Libertine, that we*

we may justly enter our Exceptions against his Evidence in matters of Religion, as an utter Enemy to it: But to reform him if possible, let him read his own Text once more, which is a Promise as well as a Prophecy, that the Spirit should assist the Saints under the Gospel in their Worship, of which Prayer is a very great part. Let him read Rom. 8. 26, 27. and there he will find the assistance of the Spirit to be necessary to help our InfirmitieS; for we know not what we shoule pray for as we ought, but the Spirit it self maketh Intercession for us with Groanings which cannot be uttered; and he that searcheth the Hearts, knoweth what is the Mind of the Spirit, because he maketh Intercession for the Saints, according to the Will of God. He may likewise read the Fifteenth Verse of that same Chapter, and there he will find that true Christians receive the Spirit of Adoption, by which they cry Abba Father, and are as naturally enabled thereby to pour out their Souls before God in Prayer for Spiritual Mercies, as we are by Nature prompted to request such things of our Earthly Parents as we stand in need of, without a Set Form. Let him read John 14. 16. and there he will find a Promise, That the Comforter, the holy Spirit, shall teach us all things; and if Prayer be a Christian Duty, it must certainly be included in the Bosom of this Promise. If he thinks to evade this by pretending that we alledg the very words of our Prayers are inspir'd, Let him quote any Dissenting Author, Quakers, or some such excepted, that have said so if he can.

I conceive his profane Raillery, that we entertain Commerce with God at all Adventures, is sufficiently censured already, when I have made it appear that we have the Promise of the Spirit to help our InfirmitieS: But I shall tell him further, that if ever he come to have any Experience of the Work of God upon his own Soul, to see the Sinfulness of his Nature, and that he is eternally undone without a Saviour, it will be no longer such a Mystery to him; and I would

would fain know his reason why a Minister that is acquainted with the Condition of his People, as all of 'em ought to be, and is able to instruct them in their Duty, and to reprove them for their Sins without a Set Form, may not as well, and as easily represent their Desires to God in the same manner, pray for his Assistance against their particular Temptations and Sins, beg for those Graces they want, offer up Praises for such Mercies as they have received, and turn his Instructions to them, into Petitions for them, without hazard of Blasphemy or Nonsense.

Let him give us his reason why all Ministers and Christians, must be tied up to the Forms of others, who have no more right to those Promises abovementioned than themselves, and as appears by the Event, have had a lesser share of them, than many others have had.

Our Author before he had made so many ill grounded Objections and Charges against Extemporany Prayer, ought first to have taken the Beam out of the Eye of his own Party, before he had offer'd to pull the Mote out of those of others. He cannot but know, or have heard, that the Book of Common Prayer is objected against, as being the Mass-Book, Romish Breviary, and Rituals, translated with some Amendments, as K. Edw. 6th. own'd in his Proclamation to the Devonshire Rebels, that it is chargeable with vain Repetitions, that it stints God to such a daily Measure of Prayers, hinders many necessary Petitions, and the enlarging on those that it has, according to the necessity of the Persons that join in it, and many other things that I shall not now touch upon.

It ill became our Author to charge Dissenters with Blasphemy in their Prayers at random, meerly upon report or slander, when his Party oblige all their Clergy to assent and consent to all the Mis-translations of the *Psalms*, and other places of Scripture in their Common-Prayer-Book, when its evident that sometimes a whole Verse or more is left out;

An Answer to

as in the 72d. *Psal.* where the Words, *Praise ye the Lord,* are 17 times omitted; as is the Conclusion of the Lord's Prayer, according to the Example of the Popish Missal, and part of the First Commandment, sometimes the Translation is blasphemous, as in *Psal.* 18. 26. where 'tis said of God, *that he shall learn frowardness with the foward;* sometimes it is absurd and sensless, as *Psal.* 58. 8. and sometimes adds Words and Sentences, which change and obscure its meaning, as *Psal.* 2. 12. and *Psal.* 14.

Page 15, and 16. He goes on with his usual Assurance; and says, ' Our Saviour prov'd by a Form, that the World has been so sensible of the Necessity of one, that there is no Age or Church that has left themselves at liberty. Not one word of which he can prove. Our Saviour indeed hath giv'n us that usually call'd the Lord's Prayer as a Rule, and which we own we may lawfully use as a Form, but not to exclude others of our own composure. The idle Pretence that our Saviour compos'd this out of the Jewish Forms then in Use, hath been long since exploded; or if it were so, is a strong presumption that 'twas only to be us'd as a Form during the Jewish Oeconomy: But it is so evident in the Scripture, that our Blessed Redeemer and his Apostles tied themselves to no certain Form of Prayers, that none who have ever read the Bible can be ignorant of it. Is it not strange, if they judg'd a set Form necessary, that they should not have compos'd one themselves, or have told us who they empower'd to do it? And is it not a reflection upon the Scriptures, that they which are able to make the Man of God wise unto Salvation, should not be thought sufficient to direct us how to pray without set Forms, as well as it is to make Men able Ministers of the New Testament without set Homilies? Would not Mankind look upon it as an Imposition on humane Nature, if Forms should be impos'd upon them, in which, and no other, they should be obliged to sue for Relief to their Superiors

periors in all the Calamities that may befall them, when it is impossible to compose such as will answer all Circumstances? And is it not equally, nay, more absurd to restrain Men to Forms compos'd by others, for addressing the Almighty in their various Exigencies, that none can know so well as themselves; and which tho' not expressed in such Terms as may please such envious Criticks as our Author, yet He that searcheth the Hearts, knows the Mind of the Spirit, as we have heard before.

As to his Assertion, that no Age hath been without a Form, 'tis *Gratis dictum*, he has it only by Tradition, and that he says himself is but little to be credited; I think the known Passages of *Justin Martyr*, and *Tertullian*, in their Apologys, are more than enough to answer such a pert Youngster. The Passages are to the following Import: *Tertullian* speaking of the Worship of the Christians, *Illi*, (that is towards Heaven,) *suspiciens Christiani manibus expansis quia Innocuis capite Nostro, quia non erubescimus de-* *niq; sine Monitore quia de pettore Oramus.* And *Justin Mart-* *tyr* on the same Subject says, *λόγω ἐυχῆς εὐχαριστίας ἀφ' οἰκ-* *περσφερόμεναι πάσιν ὅση δύναμις ἀν. ΣΤΟ.* If this pert Sophister knows any thing, he knows that those pretended Liturgies of *Peter*, *James*, *Matthew*, *Andrew*, &c. are spurious, and therefore shall say no more on the Subject, but this, that *Eusebius* in his Epistles of the Churches of *Smyrna*, *Vienna*, and *Lyons*, is silent as to any Liturgy. The like silence there is in the Epistles of *Clemens*, *Ignatius*, and the Writings of *Justin Martyr*, *Tertullian*, and *Origen*. Nay, *Baronius ad An. 58. Numb. 102.* treating exprefly of the Publick Prayers of the Church, keeps the same silence as to the use of Forms. Mr. Oliver's other silly Reflections of want of due Reverence in Places of Worship, are so like himself, that they deserve no other Answer but Contempt: If others keep on their Hats there, let him make amends for it; if he pleases, by pulling off his Shoes; and while others sit, may

he

the most reverent way to stand; and while others take
the air of the Altar, and bow to it till His Brethren
have done. For my own part, I know no reason for being
so uncozened by your Sermon, but as Conventions
are thought the best of divine, the Commentary
of Mr. Oliver's own Sermon is a convincing
proof that every thing delivered to us from the Pulpit is one
of the Miracles of God: 'We must bring them to the Touch'
as the *Servants* did, to try whether they be so, or not;
and I am certain his will never abide that Test.

I shall conclude this extemporary Answer to a premeditated Sermon against extemporary Prayer, with this one Reflection, that the late Lord Mayor may well be abused in the Streets by Ballad-singers, Hawkers, and rascally Fellows, when he was first abus'd to his face in the Pulpit by a pedantic Parson. A Noble Example, and as bravely followed! but if the City of London suffer their Chief Magistrate, and the greatest of the Kind in the whole Nation, to be thus abus'd for going to Meetings, which was neither contrary to the Laws of God nor Man, they don't acquit themselves according to their Character: It is utterly intolerable, that a Gentleman who his very Enemies must own has acted the part of a good Magistrate, should be so scandalously abus'd. If this be Mr. Oliver's deference to Dignities, it's pity he should ever preach in any other Place but Bedlam, where his name-fake Oliver's Parter'd to rave. And thus I leave the Quarreller, who sounded the seven strokes to the Field, to sound the stroke of nine to draw home the Company; for I believe their will scarcely recover his Game, so that he may even sit down contented with the Honour of being the Ringleader of those who sing such goodly Ballads, as 'The world is coming to an end the world one day, and cry out for another another.'

